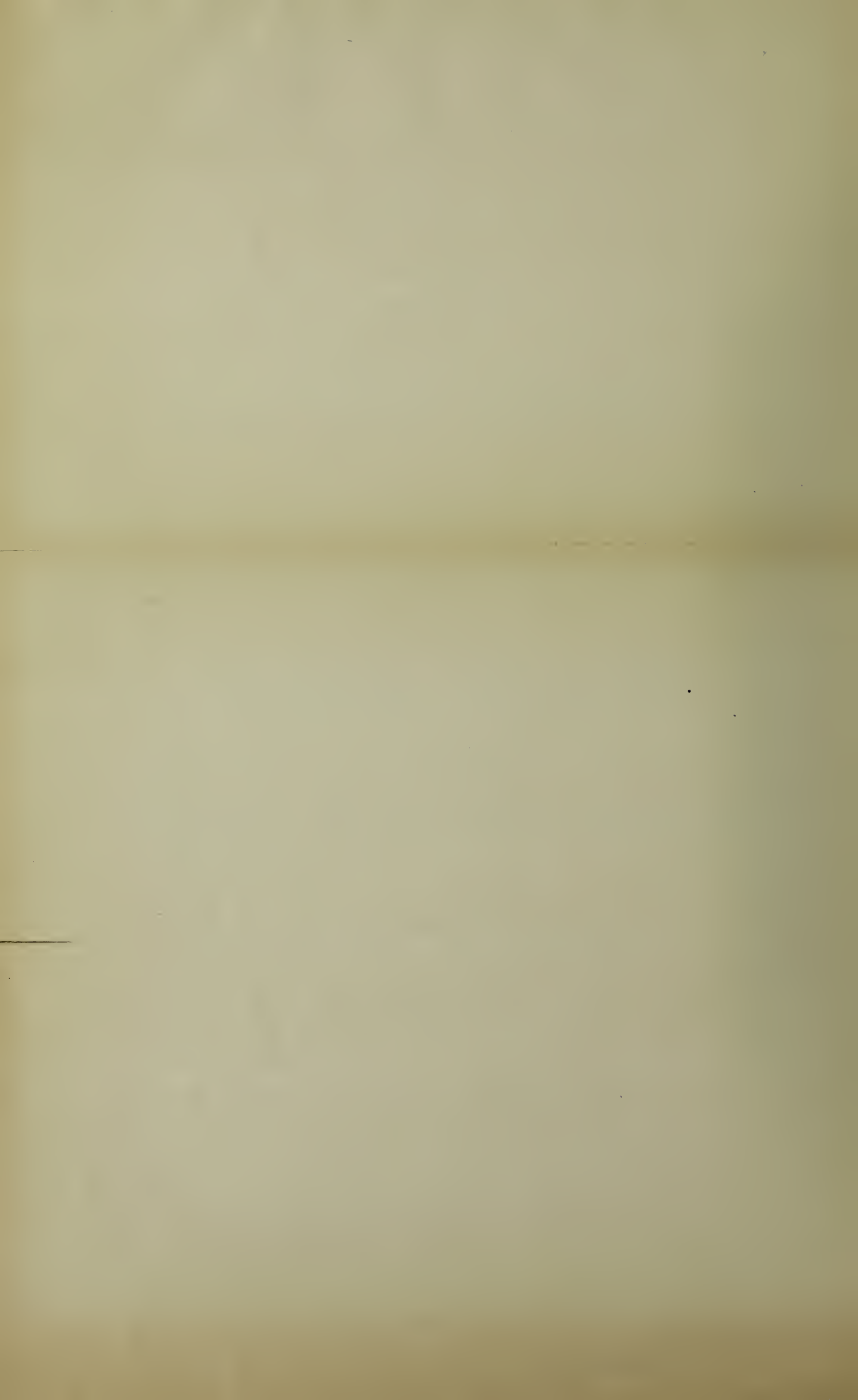


Leigh Urban District Council.

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ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

*For the Year ended December 31st, 1895.*



## TOWN HALL, LEIGH,

February 24th, 1896.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE

LEIGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,—

I beg to submit to you my Annual Report regarding the mortality and sanitary condition of your District for the year ended December 31st, 1895.

During the year 921 deaths were registered in your District giving a deathrate of 26·5 per 1000 on the estimated population of 34,700. In addition to this number 26 deaths belonging to your District occurred in the Workhouse and 3 in the Sanatorium, further raising the deathrate to 27·3 per 1,000. The deathrate is abnormally high for the year and compares very unfavourably with that of the preceding year when it was 15·4 per 1000. This high rate is due to the various epidemics which occurred during the year, beginning with Influenza in February and March, Measles and Diarrhœa being especially fatal later on. The deathrate from the seven principal zymotic diseases being 7·4 per 1000 as against 1·8 for the preceding year.

The number of births registered were 1,352, Males 693, Females 659, giving a birthrate of 38·9 per 1,000 as against 37·6 for the preceding year when 1,175 births were registered.

The excess of births over deaths for the year being 431. Of the 1,352 births 308 died before attaining their first year, being at the rate of 227 per 1,000 births, of these 28 were prematurely born, and a large number were registered as due to congenital debility.

The birth returns are sent in for Leigh and Bedford as a whole, and the birthrate for each Ward is not given.

The number of Deaths in the respective Wards were as follows, viz.:—

WARD.	Number of Deaths.	Deathrate.	Population.
St. Mary's ...	186	26·9	6,900
St. Thomas's ...	130	26·0	5,000
St. Joseph's ...	132	28·6	4,600
St. Peter's ...	71	25·3	2,800
St. Paul's ...	136	29·4	4,600
Central ...	134	25·7	5,200
West ...	81	23·1	3,500
South ...	51	24·2	2,100
Total ...	921		34,700

The following table gives the mortality at various ages :—

WARD.	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	Over 65
ST. MARY'S ... ..	67	45	4	11	40	19
ST. THOMAS'S ..	43	37	3	3	24	20
ST. JOSEPH'S ... ..	45	38	6	5	29	9
ST. PETER'S ... ..	31	18	4	3	7	8
ST. PAUL'S ... ..	52	34	5	4	27	14
CENTRAL ... ..	33	36	7	7	32	19
WEST ... ..	21	16	2	3	24	15
SOUTH... ..	16	11	3	1	10	10
Total ... ..	308	235	34	37	193	114

During the year three cases of Small-Pox were reported, one in St. Mary's and two in St. Paul's Wards, and were at once isolated in hospital, one temporarily at Astley before removal to Bolton Rural Fever Hospital. The other two were treated altogether at the latter Hospital, the Joint Hospital Committee having decided in July that the Sanatorium at Astley should be used solely for cases of Scarlet and Typhoid Fevers.

#### SCARLET FEVER

Was the cause of 11 deaths, 179 cases being reported ; they were distributed as follows :—

St. Mary's Ward	...	1 death	...	23 cases.
St. Thomas's	„	3	„	33
St. Joseph's	„	3	„	39
St. Peter's	„	1	„	11
St. Paul's	„	0	„	18
Central	„	1	„	33
West	„	0	„	8
South	„	2	„	15
		<hr/> 11		<hr/> 179

Twenty one cases were treated at the Sanatorium with one death, this case belonging to St. Joseph's Ward.

The rate per cent. of deaths to cases being 6·7.

It is practically impossible to isolate cases of Scarlet Fever in cottage houses and if parents and Guardians would avail themselves of the means of isolation viz.: the Sanatorium, the spread of this disease would be greatly retarded. Considering that the Sanatorium has only been available for receiving Scarlet and Typhoid Fever patients during the latter half of the year, I think the number who have taken advantage of its existence is encouraging and as the Hospital becomes more popular we may in future anticipate very favourable results.

#### DIPHTHERIA

Caused one death and nine cases were reported.

#### MEMBRANOUS CROUP

Was the cause of eight deaths and 15 cases were reported.

#### TYPHOID FEVER

Caused seven deaths, 90 cases being reported, and they were distributed as follows:—

St. Mary's Ward	...	1 death	...	25 cases.
St. Thomas's	„	1 „	..	6 „
St. Joseph's	„	1 „	...	8 „
St. Peter's	„	0 „	...	6 „
St. Paul's	„	1 „	...	17 „
Central	„	2 „	...	5 „
West	„	1 „	...	17 „
South	„	0 „	...	6 „
		<hr/> 7		<hr/> 90

The proportion of deaths to cases being 10 per cent. Sixteen cases were treated at the Sanatorium with two deaths, one belonging to the West and the other to St. Mary's Ward, and one doubtful case was sent home.

Of the 90 cases 47 were reported during the last quarter of the year.

In the greater proportion of cases insanitary conditions were found to exist and, where possible, were remedied.

In no case could the disease be traced to contaminated milk or water.

The following were some of the defects reported :—House drains defective, in two cases pan water closets defective, allowing the escape of sewer gas into the adjoining bedrooms, yards filthy and unpaved, deep ashpits and privies, filthy houses, overcrowding, defective slopstone pipes, cellars crowded with filth and dirt, and one house was condemned as unfit for human habitation. Personal contact with the discharges of the patients and uncleanly habits were the cause in several cases, and in one case the disease was contracted out of the town. Climatic conditions during September influenced the outbreak, 33 of the cases being reported during the month of October.

#### PUERPERAL FEVER

Was the cause of two deaths, and seven cases were reported. Three midwives were prohibited for a month from attending confinements on this account.



## ERYSIPELAS

Caused two deaths, 57 cases being reported.

## MEASLES

Was the cause of 107 deaths, 102 of these being of children under five years of age.

This disease became epidemic in St. Joseph's and St. Thomas's Wards during the early part of June, and to prevent its further spread, and in view of the approaching midsummer holidays, I advised the closing of the schools a week earlier than usual. The epidemic continued to spread, and was especially fatal in September, when there were 23 deaths. The mortality declined during October, when there were seven deaths, and again rapidly increased during November with 29 deaths, and December with 25 deaths.

The mortality from this disease was very high, and was greatly influenced by the debilitating effects of Diarrhœa, which was epidemic in the autumn. A large number of deaths being complicated with Diarrhœa as well as the usual ones of Bronchitis and Pneumonia.

I am of opinion that the closing of schools has a decidedly retarding influence, but owing to the dense population, high <sup>birth</sup> ~~death~~ rate, and social custom of the district, it does not prevent this disease from becoming epidemic.

Handbills and posters were distributed throughout the District stating what precautions should be adopted during the prevalence of Measles, Scarlet Fever, Typhoid, and Diarrhœa.

During the Christmas holidays all the Schools in the District were disinfected.

## WHOOPIING COUGH

Was the cause of 19 deaths.

## DIARRHŒA

Caused 112 deaths, 104 of these being of children under five years of age. This disease assumed an epidemic form in July with 13 deaths, and was especially fatal in August with 25, September 41, and October 14 deaths.

The deaths were distributed as follows :—

St. Mary's Ward	...	20
St. Thomas's „	...	16
St. Joseph's „	...	17
St. Peter's „	...	8
St. Paul's „	...	18
Central „	...	17
West „	...	8
South „	...	8
Total	...	<u>112</u>

As in the case of Typhoid Fever, climatic conditions during August and September were especially favourable to the spread of this disease. The infant mortality was exceptionally high, which I consider largely due to artificial feeding.

#### PHTHISIS OR CONSUMPTION

Caused 48 deaths as against 40 for the preceding year.

Diseases of the respiratory organs, as Bronchitis and Pneumonia, caused 199 deaths, many of these being due to the prevalence of Influenza in February and March, from which cause two deaths were registered. At this period special reference was made in my Report to the Memorandum issued by the Local Government Board as to what precautions should be taken during epidemic Influenza.

#### INJURIES

Caused 24 deaths, and all other

#### DISEASES UNCLASSIFIED, 343.

During the year numerous complaints have been made with regard to the abominable stench arising from the Sewage Farms. To deal with this nuisance I understand that your Sewage Committee have under their consideration the erection of temporary tanks until the permanent works of the Joint Sewerage Board of Leigh and Atherton are completed.

The appointment of your Health Committee is a step in the right direction, and I would urge upon them the importance of dealing with unpaved yards, the old fashioned privies and ashpits, the unpaved streets, and the present system of nightsoil removal, which have been frequently reported upon.

With the recent growth of the town, the waste water system of closets has been adopted in about 500 cases and continue to give general satisfaction. To encourage this system your Council undertakes to keep them in repair, and frequent inspections are made by your Sanitary officers.

During the year all the Slaughter-houses have been reported upon and the adoption of Public Slaughter-houses recommended. Also all owners of property have been notified to pave the back streets and passages adjoining their property.

Under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, two areas known as the Market Street area, comprising 18 shops and dwelling-houses, and Bradshawgate area, comprising 10 shops and dwelling-houses, were condemned.

Jones's Square and the immediate neighbourhood were fully reported upon in the early part of December.

During the year 17 houses were condemned as unfit for human habitation.

The following Nuisances have been dealt with during the year :—

Nuisances reported ...	...	...	...	...	379
„ abated ...	...	...	...	...	329
Notices served on Contractors for removal of Nightsoil ...					1565
Notices served on Owners and Occupiers of Property ...					272
Houses Disinfected ...	...	...	...	...	226
Canal Boats Inspected ...	...	...	...	...	41
Number dealt with for Infringing the Acts and Regulations ...					7

The following Insanitary conditions have also been dealt with :—

Defective House Drains ...	...	...	...	...	132
Foul Ashpits Drained ...	...	..	..	...	60
Privies and Ashpits Removed ...	...	...	...	...	23
„ „ Repaired ...	...	...	...	...	27
New Privies and Ashpits erected ...	...	...	...	...	24
Houses Repaired ...	...	...	...	...	23
Defective Sink Pipes ...	...	...	...	...	41
Untrapped Gullies ...	...	...	...	...	12
Filthy Houses ...	...	...	...	...	16
Defective Roofs ..	...	...	...	...	16
Insanitary Yards ...	...	...	...	...	64
Defective Water Closets ...	...	...	...	...	7
Sink pipes connected directly with drains ...				...	4
Number of Smoke Observations taken ...				...	18
„ Chimney Firing Reported ..				...	13
„ Prosecutions for Chimney Firing ...				...	2

Of the 50 Nuisances unabated 40 are at property visited by your Health Committee and are now under notice.

I enclose tables A and B required by the Local Government Board and County Council.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES KING,

Medical Officer of Health.